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NPS Golf Pro Retires

Classmate Magazine

Monterey, California: Naval Postgraduate School

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NPS Golf Pro Retires

It isn't every day that a guy gets the chance to retire from the Navy twice. But for Joe Higuera, the NPS Golf Course professional, the second time came at the close of a golf tournament held in honor of his retirement, Sunday, January 31.

Shortly after the score cards were tallied, Higuera was asked to walk across the street that separates the club house and the pro shop, where a new sign post had been erected on the course's cart path by the pro shop. To his surprise the cart path now had a name and it was, "HIGUERA LANE," making Joe Higuera the only man to have a cart path named after him on the Navy course.

Higuera said sometime ago that he had always wanted a street named after him, but Jerry Scheela, one of his long-time patrons brought to his attention, "Joe, you have to be dead before someone does that." According to Scheela, Joe was quick to reply, "Well you can forget that!"

Ironically on his last day as the course professional, Higuera showed everyone that he was still very much the pro at the Navy Course, when he and his wife Wyonia won the championship flight. To mark his retirement, in a military-like manner, nine of his friends crossed their clubs in a sword-like-fashion, as Higuera, with golf bag, passed under the arch of clubs, symbolizing his retirement as club pro and entering retirement for the second time.

Higuera retired the first time in 1959 as a Chief Boatswain Mate after 20 years of Naval service. This time he retired with 19 years in the school's recreation department serving as the golf course professional. During the years of overseeing the course operations, he was called upon to expand the course from nine to 18 holes, which was a difficult task given the time constraints and the amount of space he had to work with.

Later that evening over 100 of Higuera's friends packed the big dining room at one of the local restaurants where goodbyes were said and memories recalled. He was presented a number of gifts which include: a painted portrait by Stu Steuckert, which will be hung somewhere in the Navy Course Club House, a Naval Post-graduate School plaque, and a ship's clock. □



Nine Crossed Clubs—Joe Higuera passes under an arch of clubs, symbolizing the end of 19 years as the Navy Course's golf pro. Navy photo

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